

CHAPTER II

THE TODA PEOPLE

141 I DO not propose to describe at any length the physical characters of the Todas.¹ It must be sufficient to say here that the people differ remarkably in general appearance, and perhaps still more remarkably in general bearing, from the other inhabitants of Southern India. The average height of the men is about 5 ft. 7 in., and that of the women 5 ft. 1 in.; both are well-proportioned, and the men robustly built. Their heads are distinctly dolichocephalic, the cephalic index of the men being 73.3. The shaved heads of the children show very well the great length, and probably owing to the special method of shaving (see Figs. 63 and 64), this feature is in them exaggerated so as to seem almost abnormal.

142 The nose is usually well-formed and not especially broad, the nasal index being 74.9. It is often distinctly rounded in profile. The skin is of a rich brown colour, distinctly lighter than that of most of the Dravidian inhabitants of Southern India. The skins of the women are lighter than those of the men. There is much hair on the bodies of the men, who usually grow thick beards, and the hair of the head is luxuriant in both men and women. The men are strong and very agile; the agility being most in evidence when they have to catch their infuriated buffaloes at the funeral ceremonies. They stand fatigue well, and often travel great distances. One day I met an old man about seventy years of age going to the market at Gudalur for a supply

147 ¹ Those who wish for information on this point should consult the articles by Mr. Edgar Thurston in the *Bulletins* of the Madras Museum, vol. i., pp. 148 and 207, and vol. iv., p. 2.

dead man, and Pöl, the son of Punatvan. In this case all who threw earth were not only Kuudrol—i.e., of the same clan as the dead man—but were also of the same family, so that their relation to one another can be traced in the genealogies. Kuriolv, Piliar and Pöteners would all have called Pursevan "aia," or father, and were first cousins once removed according to our system of kinship. I do not know whether the earth-throwing is usually limited to the nearer relatives in the same clan. The family to which Pursevan belonged was unusually numerous, and it is probable that in most cases other families of the clan are called upon to take a part.

At a funeral seen by Mr. Walhouse¹ the earth was thrown into a circle made of rough stones laid upon the grass with an opening on one side, and Mr. Thurston² records a similar case in which the earth was thrown into a circle of stones about a yard and a half in diameter, which had been constructed for the occasion. This is probably done when the funeral is held at a place where there is no *tu*, and it is possible that these funerals were not being held at regular funeral places of the clan, and that the circles of stones were intended to represent buffalo pens. At the funeral seen by Mr. Walhouse the 'priest' handed a bag to the nearest relatives, who tied it to the stick with which they turned up the earth.

Each man, as he throws, kneels down, facing the opening of the pen, and then bows down so that he touches the earth with his forehead, many saying "Swami" as they do this. Three handfuls of earth are thrown into the pen, and then three handfuls are thrown backwards on the corpse, the man standing up as soon as he has done this. Each man covers his head with his cloak before he throws, as shown in Figs. 49 and 50.³

¹ *Ind. Antig.*, 1874, vol. iii., p. 374.

² *Bull.*, 1901, iv., p. 12.

³ These photographs were obtained from Messrs. Wiele and Klein, and I do not know the place or nature of the funeral which they illustrate, but there is no indication of a pen in the picture; they probably represent throwing earth at the entrance of a former pen. There is such a place at Taradrkiri, the male funeral place of the Kara clan. Here earth is thrown by the side of a wood where the forest has grown over the site of an old *tu*.

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1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

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P 1

THE PRIMITIVE TRIBES OF THE NILAGIRIS.

CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION OF THE NILAGIRIS.—ALTITUDE AND GENERAL CHARACTER.—
SCENERY.—CLIMATE.—RAINFALL.—RECOGNISED GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS.—
FIVE NATIVE TRIBES.—THE BADAGAS NOT ONE OF THE PRIMITIVE TRIBES.

131/133 The Nilagiris* are a lofty range of mountains in Southern India situated between 11° 10' and 11° 32' North latitude and 76° 59' and 77° 31' East longitude.

They may be said to form an abutment on the great belt of mountains, which, under the name of the Western Ghâts, runs down the western side of the Peninsula, from the River Tapti to Cape Comorin. They are bounded on the north, partly by the territory of the native kingdom of Mysore, partly by Wainâd, the upland division of the Madras

●/13 * Nilagiris means blue mountains, from *nila*, blue, and *giri*, a mountain or hill; the common, but corrupt, spelling is Neilgherries. Accounts of these mountains and their inhabitants will be found in the following works:—

- 1826. *Letter to the Calcutta Harbour*, by Rev. James Hough.
- 1827. *General and Medical Topography of the Neilgherries*, by Dr. Young.
- 1832. *The Todas*, by Captain Harriess.
- 1834. *Notes through Malabar and among the Neilgherries*, by Captain Mignon.
- " *Falls of Canvey and Neilgherries*, by Lieutenant Jervis.
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- 1835. *Geological Sketch of the Neilgherries*, by Dr. P. M. Bonga.
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- 1851. *Guns and the Blue Mountains*, by Lieutenant Burton.
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- 1864. *The Tribes inhabiting the Neilgherry Hills*, by Rev. F. Metz.
- 1868. *An Account of the Tribes inhabiting the Neilgherries*, by J. Shortt, Esq., M.D.; also *Hill Ranges of Southern India*, Part I.
- 1870. *The Aboriginal Tribes of the Neilgherry Hills*, by Lieut.-Colonel W. Ross King. *Journal of Anthropology*, No. 1, July 1870.

Besides the above, notices may be found in different Literary and Scientific Journals.

Colonel W. Marshall has just published a book called *A Pheasantist among the Todas*.—Ed.

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105 than they possess at present, with a developed system of gods who were believed to direct and govern the affairs of men, and that by a long and (slow process these gods have become unreal, the supplications of the people for their guidance and assistance have become mechanical, and worship has been transferred from gods, not to stocks and stones, but to bells and dairy vessels."

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000 given a prominent place to industry in their schemes of progress and reform. Organisations for the purpose of educating the members of the community on the importance of increased industrial efforts have been formed. The success which has attended the Industrial Exhibition conducted by the members of the community at Quilon, in 1905, has induced them to make it a permanent annual event. Some of their young men have been sent to Japan to study certain industries, and, on their return, they hope to resuscitate the dying local industries, and to enter into fresh fields of industry awaiting development. Factories for the manufacture of coir matting and allied articles have been established by the Tiya in some parts of Travancore and Cochin."

In 1906, the foundation stone of a Tiya temple at Tellicherry was laid with great ceremony. In the following year, a very successful Industrial Exhibition was held at Cannanore under the auspices of the Sri Narayan Dharma Paripalana Yogam. Still more recently, it was resolved to collect subscriptions for the establishment of a hostel for the use of Tiya youths who come from other places to Tellicherry for educational purposes.

Tiyoro.—The Tiyoros are described, in the Madras Census Report 1901, as "Oriya fishermen, who also make lotus bladders. They have four endogamous sections, viz., Torai, Ghodai, Artia, and Kulodondia." It has been suggested that the caste name is a corruption of the Sanskrit tiyara, a hunter. (See Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Tiyar.)

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● [113] **Toda.**—Quite recently, my friend Dr. W. H. Rivers, as the result of a prolonged stay on the Nilgiris, has published * an exhaustive account of the sociology and

* The Todas, 1906.

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177 fellow tribesmen. To this man finger-prints came as no novelty, since his impressions were recorded both in England and America.

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197 Writing in 1870,* Colonel W. Ross King stated that the Todas had just so much knowledge of the speech of their vassals as is demanded by the most ordinary requirements. At the present day, a few write, and many converse fluently in Tamil. The Nilgiri C.M.S. Tamil

199 mission has extended its sphere of work to the Todas, and I cannot resist the temptation to narrate a Toda version of the story of Dives and Lazarus. The English say that once upon a time a rich man and a poor man died. At the funeral of the rich man, there was a great tamasha (spectacle), and many buffaloes were sacrificed. But, for the funeral of the poor man, neither music nor buffaloes were provided. The English believe that in the next world the poor man was as well off as the rich man; so that, when any one dies, it is of no use spending money on the funeral ceremonies. Two mission
199 schools have been established, one at Ootacamund, the
891 other near Paikara. At the latter I have seen a number of children of both sexes reading elementary Tamil and English, and doing simple arithmetic.

199 A few years ago a Toda boy was baptised at Tinnevely, and remained there for instruction. It was hoped that he would return to the hills as an evangelist among his people.† In 1907, five young Toda women were baptised at the C.M.S. Mission chapel, Ootacamund. "They were clothed in white, with a white cloth over their heads, such as the Native Christians wear. A number of Christian Badagas had assembled to witness the ceremony, and join in the service."

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* Aboriginal Tribes of the Nilgiri Hills.

† Madras Diocesan Magazine, November, 1907.

a cloth, which he at once recognised as having something 147
to do with the Todas.

In former times, a Badaga could be at once picked 292
out from the other tribes of the Nilgiri plateau by his 177
wearing a turban. At the present day, some Toda
elders and important members of the community (e.g., [554]
monegars or headmen) have adopted this form of head-
gear. The men who were engaged as guides by Dr.
Rivers and myself donned the turban in honour of their
appointment.

Toda females are tattooed after they have reached 304
puberty. I have seen several multiparae, in whom the
absence of tattoo marks was explained either on the
ground that they were too poor to afford the expense
of the operation, or that they were always suckling or
pregnant—conditions, they said, in which the operation
would not be free from danger. The dots and circles,
of which the simple devices are made up,* are marked
out with lamp-black made into a paste with water, and [386]
the pattern is pricked in by a Toda woman with the
spines of *Berberis aristata*. The system of tattooing and
decoration of females with ornaments is summed up in
the following cases:—

1. Aged 22. Has one child. Tattooed with three [531]
dots on back of left hand. Wears silver necklet orna-
mented with Arcot two-anna pieces; thread and silver [307]
armlets ornamented with cowry (*Cypraea moneta*) shells
on right upper arm; thread armlet ornamented with
cowries on left forearm; brass ring on left ring finger;
silver rings on right middle and ring fingers. Lobes
of ears pierced. Ear-rings removed owing to grand- [765]
mother's death.

* See Madras Museum Bull., IV, 1896, pl. XII.

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234 *Wightiana*. Of these one, terminating in a blunt
 372 convex extremity, is about 2' 3" long; the other, with
 a hemispherical cavity scooped out close to one end,
 about 2½" in length. A little nick or slot is cut on
 the edge of the shorter stick, and connected with the
 hole in which the spindle stick is made to revolve. "In
 this slot the dust collects, and, remaining in an undisturbed
 heap, seemingly acts as a muffle to retain the friction-
 heat until it reaches a sufficiently high temperature,
 when the wood-powder becomes incandescent."* Into
 the cavity in the short stick the end of the longer stick
 fits, so as to allow of easy play. The smaller stick is
 placed on the ground, and held tight by firm pressure
 of the great toe, applied to the end furthest from the
 cavity, into which a little finely powdered charcoal
 is inserted. The larger stick is then rotated vigorously,
 "like a chocolate muller" (Tylor) between the palms of
 the hands by two men, turn and turn about, until the
 charcoal begins to glow. Fire, thus made, is said to be
 used at the sacred dairy (ti), the dairy houses of ordinary
 [766] mands, and at the cremation of males. In an account
 of a Toda green funeral,† Mr. Walhouse notes that
 "when the pile was completed, fire was obtained by
 rubbing two dry sticks together. This was done mys-
 teriously and apart, for such a mode of obtaining fire is
 looked upon as something secret and sacred." At the
 funeral of a female, I provided a box of tändstickors for
 lighting the pyre. A fire-stick, which was in current
 use in a dairy, was polluted and rendered useless by
 the touch of my Brähman assistant! It is recorded
 by Harkness‡ that a Brähman was not only refused

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* R. Beche. *Royal Magazine*, August 1901. † *Ind. Ant.*, III, 1874.

‡ Description of a singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the summit of the
 Neigherry Hills, 1892.

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In addition to the dairies which in form resemble the dwelling-huts, the Todas keep up as dairy-temples certain curious conical edifices, of which there are said to be four on the Nilgiri plateau, viz., at the Muttanād mand, near Kotagiri, near Sholūr, and at Mudimand. The last was out of repair a few years ago, but was, I was informed, going to be rebuilt shortly. It is suggested by Dr. Rivers as probable that in many cases a dairy, originally

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of the conical form, has been rebuilt in the same form as the dwelling-hut, owing to the difficulty and extra labour of reconstruction in the older shape. The edifice at the Muttanād mand (or Nōdrs), at the top of the Sigūr ghāt, is known to members of the Ootacamund Hunt as the Toda cathedral. It has a circular stone base and a tall conical thatched roof crowned with a large flat stone, and is surrounded by a circular stone wall. To penetrate within the sacred edifice was forbidden, but we were informed that it contained milking vessels, dairy apparatus, and a swāmi in the guise of a copper bell (mani). The dairyman is known as the varzhal or wursol. In

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front of the cattle-pen of the neighbouring mand, I noticed a grass-covered mound, which, I was told, is sacred. The mound contains nothing buried within it, but the bodies of the dead are placed near it, and earth from the mound is placed on the corpse before it is removed to the burning-ground. At "dry funerals" the buffalo is said to be slain near the mound. It has been suggested by Colonel Marshall* that the "boa or boath [poh.] is not a true Toda building, but may be the bethel of some tribe contemporaneous with, and cognate to the Todas, which, taking refuge, like them, on these hills, died out in their presence."

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* A Phonologist among the Todas, 1873.

Despite the hypothesis of Dr. Rivers that the Todas 174
are derived from one or more of the races of Malabar,
their origin is buried among the secrets of the past. So
too is the history of the ancient builders of cairns and
barrows on the Nilgiri plateau, which were explored by
Mr. Brecks when Commissioner of the Nilgiris.* 172
The bulk of the Brecks' collection is now preserved in the
Madras Museum, and includes a large series of articles
in pottery, quite unlike anything known from other parts
of Southern India. Concerning this series, Mr. R. Bruce
Foote writes as follows.† " The most striking objects
are tall jars, many-storied cylinders, of varying diameter
with round or conical bases, fashioned to rest upon
pottery ring-stands, or to be stuck into soft soil, like the
amphoræ of classical times. These jars were surmounted
by domed lids. On these lids stood or sat figures of the
most varied kind of men, or animals, much more rarely of
inanimate objects, but all modelled in the rudest and
most grotesque style. Grotesque and downright ugly
as are these figures, yet those representing men and
women are extremely interesting from the light they
throw upon the stage of civilization their makers had
attained to, for they illustrate the fashion of the garments
as also of the ornaments they wore, and of the arms or
implements carried by them. The animals they had
domesticated, those they chased, and others that they
probably worshipped, are all indicated. Many figures
of their domestic animals, especially their buffaloes and
sheep, are decorated with garlands and bells, and show
much ornamentation, which seems to indicate that they
were painted over, a custom which yet prevails in many

* J. W. Brecks. Account of the Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the
Nilgiris, 1873.

† Catalogue of the Prehistoric Antiquities, Government Museum, Madras, 1901.

not kill it. Do you think we could kill it ourselves? ⁸⁴⁷
 Those tell lies who say we laid it down before the open- ¹⁷⁸
 ing of the buffalo-pen, so that it might be run over and
 killed by the animals. We never did such things, and
 it is all nonsense that we drowned it in buffalo's milk.
 Boys were never killed—only girls; not those who were ^[732]
 sickly and deformed—that would be a sin, but, when
 we had one girl, or in some families two girls, those
 that followed were killed. An old woman (kelachi) used
 to take the child immediately it was born, and close
 its nostrils, ears, and mouth with a cloth thus—here
 pantomimic action. It would shortly droop its head,
 and go to sleep. We then buried it in the ground. The ^[465]
 kelachi got a present of four annas for the deed." The
 old man's remark about the cattle-pen refers to the
 Malagasy custom of placing a new-born child at the
 entrance to a cattle-pen, and then driving the cattle over
 it, to see whether they would trample on it or not.*
 The Missionary Metz† bears out the statement that the
 Toda babies were killed by suffocation.

At the census, 1901, 453 male and 354 female ^[162]
 Todas were returned. In a note on the proportion of
 the sexes among the Todas, Mr. R. C. Punnett states ‡
 that "all who have studied the Todas are agreed upon
 the frequency of the practice (of infanticide) in earlier
 times. Marshall, writing in 1872, refers to the large
 amount of female infanticide in former years, but
 expresses his conviction that the practice had by that
 time died out. Marshall's evidence is that of native
 assurance only. Dr. Rivers, who received the same
 assurance, is disinclined to place much confidence in

* Ellis. History of Madagascar.

† Tribes Inhabiting the Neilgherry Hills. By a German missionary, 1856.

‡ Proc. Cambridge Philosoph. Soc., XII, 1904.

551 patrilineal sib. Only one name is borne by each individual. Rivers³ mentions
 [614] the fact that, if two individuals bear the same name, one of them will
 change his name. Such identity of name is avoided merely to escape con-
 fusion and misunderstanding. Identical names can seldom occur among men
 for reasons that will be clear later in this paper. They are more likely to
 occur among women. One recent case is that of two women who were named
 sonderidz. One of these is the daughter of imuxfun (19, Imokhvan)⁴ and
 she retains the name in this form. The other is the daughter of midaxumir
 (63, Midjkudr); she is usually called sondur to distinguish her from the
 other, though her full name may still be used when there is no possibility of
 confusion.

778 §3. To make clear the background of the naming system it is necessary
 771 to clarify the religious system of the Todas. Each sib possesses a number of
 234 munds,⁵ which are essentially holy places or gods with dwelling houses at-
 tached. The holy place or god is the localized dairy-complex, all the ele-
 ments of which are holy. The elements are the sacred buffaloes (as opposed
 to the non-sacred buffaloes), the dairies, and the milk of the buffaloes. No
 further localization of the divinity appears to be made within the complex.
 All the contents of the dairies, bells, tools, coagulant (called pep), partake
 to some degree of the holiness of the complex, and, like the buffaloes and the
 milk, must not be profaned by contact with profane persons; but it cannot
 be discovered that any object or place is especially the seat of the divinity.
 Linguistic evidence has made it clear that this is correct. In both songs and
 [192] speech the mund (excluding the dwelling houses) is referred to as tōt "god"
 or tōt "sacred place" or by the compound tōtōnōr, and my informants
 can make no distinction between these terms, or between mōd "mund" and
 nōr when these two form a pair in the songs.⁶ These divinities are to some
 extent anthropomorphic, since it is said that all the gods, including the
 [776] gods of the Hindu pantheon worshipped in the plains, the Toda gods who
 [778] are mountains and rivers of the Nilgiris, as well as the god ōm who lives in
 [779] the world of the dead, and the gods who are the mounds, i.e. the tōtōnōr,
 hold assemblies to settle their disputes in the dairy of the mund mym.

[113] ³ W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, 1906), p. 625. He has a chapter on "Personal Names," pp. 619-37.

⁴ The number of the genealogical table in Rivers and the spelling of the name in the table will be given for each individual mentioned.

[192] ⁵ Toda terminology applies the word mōd to (1) the sib as a whole, (2) each separate dairy institution plus a dwelling place which belongs to the sib, and in several other ways which are not in point here.

[113] ⁶ For the technique of the songs, see my paper, *The Songs of the Todas* (Proceedings, American Philosophical Society, Vol. 77, pp. 343-66, 1937).

THE CHRISTIAN TODAS *

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ABSTRACT

A description of the Christian Todas in their relations with the flourishing culture of the tribe. They retain in the economic sphere a dependence on the tribal pastures, and show a tendency to retain the old type of economic partnership with individual Kotas. The converts retain their Toda names, even when these belong to the tribal religious sphere; in naming children born within the Christian community there is a tendency not to give Toda names. Cross-cousin marriage is followed when possible; disputes on matrimonial affairs follow tribal patterns. The tribal dance and song-technique are retained, and one Christian lyric of great beauty was recorded. The tribe treats the Christians as outsiders in general, but several links remain, notably in the meeting of obligations by both sides when marriages take place. There are attempts by the tribe to force the Christians to meet obligations on the occasion of tribal funerals; when they are met, it is generally due to compulsion. An attempt is made to evaluate the whole situation in terms of the attitudes of tribal members.

DURING a linguistic field-trip among the Todas of the Nilgiris in South India, I came into contact also with the section of the tribe who have become Christians. In fact, the two interpreters whom I used in my investigations into the Toda language were Christian Todas, since it is only among these that any fluent knowledge of English is so far to be found. A number of interesting episodes of Christian Toda life came to light during the period of nearly three years in which I had intermittent contact with the two communities. It seems useful to collect these and to attempt an evaluation of the elements of the tribal culture which have survived among the Christians and of the relations between the tribal Todas and the Christians. The attempt is worthwhile since studies of Christianized communities which exist by the side of the parent communities with the original culture in full working-order are rare.

The only mission which has worked among the Todas in recent times and made converts is the Church of England Zenana Mission Society. The work was begun in 1890 by Miss Catherine F. Ling¹ and seems to

* This paper represents a small part of the work which I was enabled to do in South India with the aid of the American Council of Learned Societies in 1935-6 and of the American Philosophical Society (Pewsey Fund) in 1936-8.

¹ Two small books by this lady describe her work: *Down in Toda Land* (3rd ed., Madras, S. P. C. K. Press, 1919) and *Scenes on the Nilgiris* (London, Zenith Press, 1933). There is little of anthropological interest in these, which were of course written as descriptions of missionary work; the resistance of the tribe however is well brought out and some of the accounts of converts' histories amount almost to life-histories such as anthropologists gather.

797 have had as its immediate incentive an incident in which a Toda man who was ill was given medicine by a Tamilian Christian and told to pray at the Tamil Church in Ootacamund. He seems to have interpreted this as a vow to a god, such vows being freely undertaken by the Todas,² and on recovery he went to the church to do whatever rites were customary. The missionaries regarded this as a direct call to undertake mission work with the tribe and Miss Ling was appointed to be in charge. In 1904 the first convert was baptized, [kišker] (59, Kishkar),³ his own name being used as a baptismal name along with Paramajyoti, a Sanskrit name of the Tamil and Tamil Christian type. This man was appointed a catechist to preach to the Todas and still acts as such. In 1907 the next converts, five young women, were baptized. Preaching and teaching were carried on from the beginning in the face of recurrent opposition from the tribe, although much of the teaching was only indirectly religious. When converts were made, economic difficulties arose since these persons were cut off from the tribal life, both by the tribe and also, though reluctantly, by the missionaries, whose aspiration had been to convert the tribe as a whole and retain the old economic structure while doing away with the religious and the more un-Christian social features of the tribal culture (such, e.g., as polyandry, the low status of women, etc.) and adding agriculture to the pastoral regime. The difficulty was met by getting permission to use some of the abandoned Toda village and dairy sites and pasturages; on two of these the converts were settled and agriculture was joined to the care of cattle in providing a living for them. At both places a church was built, the more important having a turret and bell provided by the converts themselves, which Miss Ling, probably correctly, regards as an equivalent in the life of the Toda Christians to the sacred bells of the tribal dairies. Houses for the people, schools, and medical dispensaries complete the material side of the mission colonies. The number of converts has varied. Many Todas at various periods have undergone religious instruction preliminary to baptism without being able to take the final step. At present the number of persons living at the two colonies is

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² See my paper *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years after* (Annals Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute 19. 101-121), 117.

³ When a Toda is mentioned, he is placed with reference to the genealogical tables in W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, Macmillan and Co., 1906), by the number of the table in which his name occurs and the spelling there given. The writing of Toda words in this paper is strictly phonemic. The phonetic characters used are in general those of the IPA. Small capitals represent retroflex consonants, except that [ʃ] is used for the sibilant. Italics represent alveolars, [r] being an alveolar trill. [r̥] is a post-dental one-flap tremulant. [ʂ] represents the abnormal sibilant (almost like English ʂ). [s̥] and [ʃ̥] are affricates of *ts* and *ds* type respectively. [ə] is a mid, mixed, rounded vowel, [u] high, back, unrounded. When two vowel characters are juxtaposed, they together represent a diphthongal phoneme; [aui] in one name is the diphthong [aui] plus the vowel [i].

THE CHRISTIAN TODAS

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about 50, including some wives who were TAMILIAN by origin, and all the children.* In 1932 Miss Ling returned to England after fifty years of missionary life. The Toda Christians who had turned to her for settlement of all their difficulties now found themselves without strong and sympathetic guidance, and dissatisfaction with those who succeeded her and quarrels among themselves, as well as difficulty in meeting their financial obligations to the mission and to Miss Ling herself, who had aided them with large loans from her own means, produced in the community what may only be regarded as disintegration. In 1938 Miss Ling felt compelled to return to India and her influence had already begun to heal the breaches before I lost contact with the community.

A few of the men have taken to other economic pursuits than agriculture. One is a chauffeur, one a policeman, another was apprenticed to a tailor. [kuaron] (34, Kwodron) showed promise in school and later studied at the Madras Christian College in Madras, where he learned English with remarkable correctness and fluency (he was my best interpreter). He was employed as a clerk in various government offices in Ootacamund but got into financial difficulties of a somewhat disreputable sort, and finally to extricate himself became a convert to the Seventh Day Adventist Mission. [kanfwsodj] (14, Kunpuradi) has been a chauffeur but is now an agriculturalist. His English is rather defective, but he made a remarkably good interpreter and informant in investigations into ethnological matters, since his interest in tribal affairs is intense, and in the song-technique of the Todas, with which he is thoroughly familiar, being himself the quasi-official composer of the Toda Christians. Most of the members of the community work industriously at their agricultural life and, since the Nilgiris specialize in growing potatoes for the markets in the plains and as far north as Bombay, economic life is fairly secure and permits a standard which is in many ways higher than that of the tribe and than that of many other Christian communities of South India. The women continue to do Toda embroidery for sale through the mission.¹

Economically, the Christian community has had to separate itself from the tribe. One link however remains. The pastures of the Christians become poor seasonally and at such times cattle which are not giving milk are often pastured with the tribe's herds in the dry-weather pastures. The man to whom such cattle are entrusted is recompensed with a small fee. Frequently the same course is adopted with young

* This figure is only a guess and probably a slight overestimate. The census figure of 507 for the Todas in the year 1931 included 27 Christian Todas, according to the enumerators, although the mission claimed 37. The Christian community has undoubtedly grown since then by the addition of converts and of births.

¹ See my paper *Toda Garments and Embroidery*, JACOB 37. 277-289.

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term [kel.] should not be used of such relationships with the Christian Todas. 648
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In religion there has of course been a complete break. None of the tribal religious practices could have been fitted into the Christian pattern and there has been no attempt to do so, but rather a revulsion on the part of the missionaries from anything that smacked of the old religion (note however Miss Ling's acceptance of the attitude towards the church-bell mentioned above). This has gone so far that the missionaries who succeeded Miss Ling frowned on dancing. In the tribe the dancing is a part of every social occasion. It is performed at religious ceremonies, but also at funerals, ceremonies when the ears are pierced, weddings, and almost all other occasions when a number of the people gather. Even the children dance in play in the style of their elders (girls have been seen dancing as well as boys, though Toda women never dance). Miss Ling, realizing that the dance is not religious, looked with an indulgent eye on the dancing of the converts and in fact rather encouraged it than otherwise, with its accompanying extempore songs, at weddings, christenings and other joyous occasions. The missionaries in charge during the interregnum when Miss Ling was in England, with lack of insight and sympathy, forbade dancing. The reason given was that such a typically tribal activity would produce a hankering for other tribal customs and consequent backsliding from Christianity; possibly also a Puritanical attitude to dancing in general played its unacknowledged part. The effect that I observed however was that when the missionary guests retired from the scene of festivity, wedding or the like, dancing took place, and there resulted a regrettably un-Christian fostering of deceit and dislike of the missionaries in charge. It is to be observed that the Christian festivities are almost always attended by tribal Todas of the neighborhood and also by others from a greater distance who are related to the principals in Christian weddings and christenings. They are participants in the feasting and the males among them join with alacrity in the dancing. 797
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The song-words that are composed during the dancing, as well as all other songs in the Toda language that are composed by the Christians, are of the tribal type and use the normal Toda technique of word and tune.¹ As most Toda songs are extempore and topical, so are the songs made by the Christians. There is an attempt to enlarge the verbal technique to embrace specifically Christian concepts and considering the rigidity of the conventions there are signs that the attempt will be suc- [184]
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¹ See my paper *The Songs of the Todas*, *Proceedings American Philosophical Society* 77. [113]

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533 successful. Miss Ling had expressed the hope that the converts might some day break into Christian song in their own tongue and especially that a Benedicite might be composed. It is obviously too much to hope for that there should be a completely new style of song evolved; all that one could reasonably expect would be either that on the basis of Tamilian music or, less likely, European music songs would be composed with Toda words, or that with practice the conventions of Toda singing could be extended to cover the Christian spirit and subject-matter. With a view to helping on the latter evolution (perhaps ethnologically unethical, but certainly justified if it would contribute to filling an evident gap in the life of the Christian Todas, and also interesting as an experiment to see how far the technique could be made by a clever composer to cover a previously untreated subject), I suggested to [kanfusoði], my interpreter and a man versed in the song-technique, that he should attempt a Benedicite. He without further prompting attempted composition in both the modes suggested above. His fairly literal translation, based on his Tamil Prayer-book and to be sung to the tune used in church, was hardly a success. But since he had sharpened his wits by this effort, there was a much more satisfactory result. At the end of a night when he had been sitting in his potato-field to prevent raids on his crops by wild pig and deer, as dawn broke he burst forth in a song. This he later dictated to me and it proved to be a remarkable blending of the Christian subject-matter and the imagery suggested by the Toda poetical technique. The song, when read in translation to westerners whose judgment in such matters I value highly, has been adjudged a highly poetical lyric. Certainly for poetic value it far surpasses most of the 300 Toda songs that I have recorded. Whether efforts on such a high level can be produced in greater number remains for some future investigator to discover.

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[533] I have shown elsewhere * that the personal names of Toda males are in almost all cases derived from the religion of the dairy-complex and more specifically from the complexes of the patrilineal sib in the case of each man, while the names of Toda females are more miscellaneous but in many cases show an origin in the song-language. In all cases the Toda Christians who were proselytized from the tribe have retained their Toda names, usually as baptismal names, in spite of the definitely religious connotations in the case of male names. In addition they have all received Christian names, either English or Sanskrit-Tamil. When we come to the children born to the Christian community the case is different. There the Christian names are in the foreground of interest and are the only ones given at baptism. In most cases it seems that no

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[113] * *Personal Names of the Todas*, *American Anthropologist*, N.S., 40, 205-223.

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[867] The adult members of the community are still in many respects Todas. The new generation however is growing up without intimate knowledge of things Toda and in most cases without knowledge of the Toda language, since there is an admixture of Tamilians in the community and all formal instruction is carried on in the Tamil language. New converts may and probably will be made who will introduce fresh Toda influences. But it is to be expected that the community will in time become so Tamilized that those born into it will hardly differ at all from other Tamil Christians and fresh converts will find few Toda traditions there to strengthen.

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783 It still remains to discuss the attitude of the tribe towards the Christian community. Theoretically since the Christians have "broken caste," have given up the tribal religious and social rites and have adopted some habits which are repugnant to the tribe, e.g., meat-eating,¹¹ there should be an absolute break in the relations between the two communities. The chief marks of outcasting in most Hindu communities are refusal of the caste to intermarry with the outcastes and also to inter-dine. The latter is based on the conception of pollution; a person who is not of the caste and who does not observe the customs of the caste, especially in such intimate matters as preparation and consumption of food, will produce equal uncleanness in the caste-members, necessitating elaborate purifications. The Todas are not in a strict sense a caste, though conceptions of purity and pollution are prominent in their culture. They will not, for example, go into a Kota village since the Kotas are unclean by occupation (blacksmithing and pottery) and by eating habits (meat and even carrion are regularly eaten); all transactions with Kotas at a Kota village must be carried on at the green outside the Kota village. Nor is a Kota allowed to enter a Toda village. Interdining between Todas and Kotas is non-existent. The Badagas however do not suffer from the restrictions that the Kotas do. Badagas may enter Toda villages and those in certain formalized relations with the Todas are invited to Toda ceremonies and eat with them at the feasts that follow. The European is on about the same footing as the Badaga, though he eats meat. I have been invited on several occasions to take part in the feast following a Toda ceremony and my sitting in the row of Toda feasters did not inconvenience them as that of a Kota would. The Toda Christian also is invited to eat at such feasts and does eat. He is not however allowed into a Toda dairy, any more than any other profane person is, nor is he allowed into a Toda house, in this respect being like the European. The European may enter the

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[113] ¹¹ See *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years after*, p. 110, for the somewhat equivocal attitude of the tribe to this habit.

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The European may enter the house if he takes off his shoes and if the cooking utensils have been removed from the house; this seems to be a mark of courtesy to the ruling caste and no Toda will trouble himself to remove the cooking utensils to oblige a Toda Christian. This, I think, is the essence of the tribal attitude. The Toda Christian is an outsider, with the complication that he was once a member of the tribe and still has all the links of blood-relationship and affinal relationship with the tribe. There is resentment because he has left the tribe, and on occasion the diviners *ex officio* and even other members of the tribe may charge the misfortunes of the tribe to the fact that there have been converts to Christianity and may commence open hostilities (wordy quarrelling and sometimes blows) if a Christian Toda happens to be present, especially if he has brought a European to see ceremonies. At the same time the pull of the original relationship survives in a measure and is clearly evident when a respected member of the tribe sits in the Toda Christian meeting and gives the benefit of his advice and when those members of the tribe related to the principals at Christian weddings and christenings attend these ceremonies.

The overt actions of the tribal Todas can be illustrated in more detail. The other side of the interdining relation works as follows. The tribal Toda when he comes to a Christian Toda house or ceremony will eat only if the food has been cooked by a man, either tribal in origin or born in the Christian community; this is a little obscure since food is ordinarily cooked in a tribal Toda house by the women and the question of menstruation pollution does not enter to complicate the picture.¹⁶ It may be due to the presence of women of Tamil origin in the community or perhaps to the fact that women converts are not readmitted to the tribe even if they wish to leave the Christian community. Furthermore, the cooking must be done in a metal vessel and not in an earthen one; according to general Hindu views pollution can be removed from the former but not from the latter.

Readmission to the tribe of a Toda Christian male who was born in the tribe is always possible and has happened often enough. For example, [kanfusodj] went back to the tribe on one occasion in order to marry a woman with whom he was in love. He was unable through illness to stand the physical life of the tribe, however, and became a Christian again. It appears that the chief ceremony in readmission to the tribe was provision for him of a new perineal cloth [kumun], the fundamental garment of the Toda man.¹⁷ A Toda woman, once she

¹⁶ See my paper *Toda Menstruation Practices*, which will appear in the Dr. F. W. Thomas Festschrift Volume to be published by the *New Indian Antiquary*.

¹⁷ Cf. the regulation that a man who has lost his perineal cloth is barred from going to a dairy until after sunset of that day.

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[PART II

TODA CULTURE THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER: AN ACCULTURATION STUDY¹

BY

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The Todas of the Nilgiri Hills in South India have long been an object of interest to anthropologists. They became known to Europeans early in the 19th century when the hills were visited by Sullivan (1813), and since then they have been written about by many officials as well as by more casual visitors. Finally, in 1901-2 a close study was made of their institutions by W. H. R. Rivers, and his treatise *The Todas*, published in 1906, has been since then an anthropological classic, describing as it does a tribe of pastoralists with a culture very aberrant as compared with that of the rest of India. Centred upon the buffalo,

¹ My work on the Todas was done with the aid of the American Council of Learned Societies in 1935-6 and of the American Philosophical Society (Penrose Fund) in 1936-7. Dr. D. G. Mandelbaum has read over the paper and given me the benefit of his suggestions and criticisms. [22]

Bibliographical details of the publications referred to in the paper are: 113 ●

W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas*: London, Macmillan and Co., 1906.

M. B. Emeneau, *The Songs of the Todas*, Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society 77, 543-560.

Id., *Toda Garments and Embroidery*, Journal of the American Oriental Society 57, 277-292.

(Continued on next page)

114 the care of which forms a very complex ritual, and containing within itself such an unusual feature as polyandry, this culture was bound to attract attention as a thing *qui generis* in the field of knowledge of anthropologists. Work on the language of the tribe in 1935-7 has given me an opportunity to study the culture as well. The present paper attempts to assess the amount and nature of such changes as the culture has suffered in the thirty-five years since Rivers' visit.

177 In 1901-2, the Todas were already exposed to outside influences of several different kinds. Leaving aside their immemorial connexion with the Kotas and the Kurumbas, these three tribes regarding themselves as being the aboriginal inhabitants of the hills and as having been created there together, and their more recent but still ancient connexion with the immigrant Badagas, two other strong influences had been in a position to affect Toda culture from the time that the Nilgiris became accessible early in the 19th century. The English, who created three hill-stations, Ootacamund, Coonoor, and Kotagiri, and a military station Wellington, provided one of these influences, and their Indian servants, minor officials, and tradespeople, an even stronger influence. Since Rivers' time conditions in the hills have changed so that outside influences have become potentially much stronger. A railway now connects Ootacamund and Coonoor with the Tamilian plains to the south and motorbuses connect the whole area with the Mysore plains. The possibilities of the Nilgiris as a suitable ground for growing vegetable produce and tea have been exploited to a high degree. Their attractions as holiday grounds for Europeans and a place of retirement at the end of official life have been certainly not more widely appreciated, but perhaps more widely used by Europeans from all parts of India. The climax of this tendency of the English to invade the Nilgiris

113 *id.*, Personal names of the Todas, *American Anthropologist*, April 1938.

id., An Echo-word Motif in Dravidian Folk-tales, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (not yet published).

Census of India, 1931, vol. 14 (Madras), part 1 (report by M. W. M. Yeatts), 387-391.

[M. R. Emeneau, *Toda Marriage Regulations and Taboos*, *American Anthropologist* 39, 103-112. This completes the list of my papers on the Todas up to date, but is not referred to in this paper.]

Toda culture thirty-five years after

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In general, 177
the impression is gained that if Government did not keep a close 233
watch on Toda land, either from a concern for Toda welfare or 425
from a desire to preserve the amenities of the Nilgiris, and pre- 657
vent the free play of economic pressure, the pastures would soon
all be alienated, or at any rate to such an extent that the economic
life of the Todas would be severely prejudiced. Toda economic 177
life is to this important extent artificially hedged off from the 657
interference of outside influences and preserved from total disruption.
Sir Athelstane Baines' remark that the Todas are "stall-
fed aborigines" is in this respect entirely justified. 1

The Toda Amelioration Scheme was mentioned above in con- 177
nexion with the payment of Toda debts. The other chief feature 657
of the plan was to induce the Todas to grow potatoes and to work 241
this agricultural enterprise and the sale of their ghee through
two cooperative societies. The advantages of the Scheme
appealed to a number of the chief men, and some of the super-
ficial benefits made a remarkable appeal to less responsible Todas
as a method of getting something for nothing. The scheme broke
down on its really vulnerable point. The Todas are pastoralists
with no tradition of agriculture and the continuous back-breaking
labor it demands, and the attempt to make agriculturalists of
them while their own pastoral occupation was still in full work-
ing order could not with any confidence have been expected to
succeed. 2 Those few who personally engaged themselves in the
work found that it went so against their habits that two years of
it were more than enough. The majority merely hired outsiders
to do the manual labor for them, or sold the seed-potatoes and
tools that were advanced to them by the societies. No trace of
the Scheme now remains.

Casual employment as beaters for English sportsmen brings 648
in a small, irregular income to a few Todas. The Maharaja of 434
Mysore each year engages fifteen men of the tribe to act as an
ornamental bodyguard at his palace in Ootacamund. Some few

1 Sir Athelstane Baines *Ethnography (Castes and Tribes.)* [Grundriss
der Indo-arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde II, 3], 123.

2 See also the Census Officer in 1931 (reference in note 1) for the same
judgment on the scheme.

TODA MENSTRUATION PRACTICES*

By

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The Todas of the Nilgiris in South India in the regulations governing women during menstruation are as peculiar as in many other of their institutions. In the account of their regulations which is presented in this paper this will be shown by reference to the regulations of the communities surrounding them.

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During this period Toda women are not secluded, as they are by the Kotas and Badagas of the Nilgiris and by most other communities of India. They remain in the one-room houses of the tribe and no restrictions are placed on their contacts with ordinary men. Sexual intercourse is forbidden, but other physical contacts are allowed. E.g. they may sit on the same seat as a man and may assist a man or be assisted by him in dressing the hair, bathing etc. Contact is always avoided even in the woman's normal state with a man of the same patrilineal sib or with a man of the same matrilineal line,¹ but during menstruation no further restrictions are imposed.

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They cook as usual; this again is in marked contrast with the practice of other communities of India. The taboo on sexual intercourse during a woman's menstrual period is apparently broken at times; no penalty is applied either to the man or to the woman if such breach is discovered. A man however who has had such intercourse may not become a dairyman-priest until after the next new moon.

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The period involves however an even stricter seclusion from contact with the dairy-complex than is usually enjoined on the Toda women. The restriction on a man's becoming a priest after intercourse with a menstruating woman has just been mentioned. Normally women may drink buttermilk from the dairies, and it is the women's task to take receptacles to the line of stones marking off the houses, or profane part of the munds,² from the dairy and its grounds, in order that the priest may fill them with buttermilk. Both these practices are forbidden for menstruating women. Even during their

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* This paper was written during receipt of aid from the American Philosophical Society (Penrose Fund), to which I must acknowledge my gratitude.

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1. See my paper "Toda marriage regulations and taboos" in *American Anthropologist* 39. 103-12.

2. A mund is any place where the Todas live or carry on tribal activities which are localized, e.g., funerals or dairy operations. In my paper "Toda culture thirty-five years after" in *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* Vol. XIX, pp. 101-121, I have outlined the nature of the munds and have shown that those at which the people live are typically made up of two parts, a dairy-complex which is a god, and a profane part where the houses are.

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TODA MENSTRUATION PRACTICES

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normal period they must be careful not to touch the priest while he is exercising his priestly duties; e.g. when a woman takes the vessel to the line of stones, she sets it down on the ground and retreats a few paces and the priest avoids contact even with the profane vessel. Priests, however, are permitted to sleep in the profane part of the mund, the houses, on certain nights of the week, depending on the grade of dairy at which they officiate, and on these nights they may have intercourse with the women in the houses and no restriction is put upon their contact with the women.¹ A menstruating woman, however, must not stay in the house when a priest comes to sleep there. She is further debarred from touching any buffaloes, calves, or buffalo-pens, even those which she may touch at ordinary times, as e.g. non-sacred buffaloes which are being milked for the use of the houses. The restrictions which ward off women from the dairy-complex are at ordinary times stringent enough; these extra ones are designed to remove the last traces of contact during a woman's menstruation period.

The funeral huts used for men at all male funeral places are called by the word which denotes a dairy (poly). Some of the sibs in fact place the corpse of a man in a dairy which is used as such and in one or two other cases there are traditions that the funeral huts were originally dairies of certain grades.² A menstruating woman may not enter any funeral hut of a male to lament over the body. This is a slight further indication that all the funeral huts of males are regarded as dairies, as they are terminologically. The ne:lpoly, or hut which is built for the accommodation of the relics of a man between the first and second funerals, also has as part of its name the word for dairy. It is not however regarded as a dairy, nor is there any indication that it was a dairy at any stage of its development. But no menstruating woman may enter it. It is probable that this restriction has been made following upon the restriction on a menstruating woman's entering the funeral hut proper.

One mund, ku:u:sy of the sib called mō:r was according to tradition formerly a dairy-mund of the highest grade, a ti:-mund. A certain amount of its original sanctity still attaches to it, and in theory women do not live there any more than they do at ti:-munds. The inconvenience of this regulation is however overcome in practice by a fiction. Women live at the mund ku:u:sy but the marks of women's occupation are not allowed in the mund, i.e., the grain-pounder, the winnowing-basket, and the broom must be kept outside the mund and never brought to the houses. All household duties involving these articles must be performed outside of the munda. Likewise, no menstruating woman may stay in the mund; she must go outside and stay away for three days. At ordinary times she may be in the mund by a fiction, but when she is really and unequivocally a woman, the fiction will not avail to preserve the sanction of this mund.

1. See RIVENS, *The Todas*, pp. 62 (towards the bottom), 67 (bottom), 72 (towards the bottom), 78 (middle).

2. RIVENS, pp. 339-40.

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616 Either the couple live together in the same *mad*, quite openly, or the
 837 man visits the woman periodically at the house of her husband or
 husbands. In the case of a Tardharsh being *mokkthodvaiol* to a
 [62] Teivilkh woman, because of the prohibition for those of her kind to
 visit the *mads* of the superior moiety, it always has to be her lover who
 visits her at her home. There is no objection on the part of the hus-
 bands as, in accordance with the formalities necessary to establish a
mokkthoditi relation, they will have been consulted in advance and
 will have given their consent to the arrangement.

837 The usual way for a man to go about getting himself a *sedvaitazmokh*
 is, after having found the lady of his choice, to approach her husband
 or husbands, if she has any, or her father or fathers if she has none,
 and to obtain their consent to what he plans. He will agree to give the
 [43] men a present (such as a piece of cloth or a *putkuli*) in exchange,
 whereupon, if the other party is in accordance, he becomes the woman's
mokkthodvaiol without any further formality. (Rivers has it that a
 third party may be called in to seal the pact, (see *The Todas*, p. 527)
 but none of my informants said this was done nowadays.)

Some time later, he will make collective obeisance to the lady's
pailol, that is, her male relations (fathers and brothers). This is as in
 [588] a Toda marriage, there being no difference at all here between regular
 and irregular unions. On this occasion the man will promise to give
 the woman some pieces of jewellery, and her son, should she have one,
 a buffalo calf. It is after these promises have been made, that the
mokkthodvaiol will perform the *kalmelpudlithi* salutation to the *pailol*
 and, significantly enough, after this has taken place, he will call his
sedvaitazmokh's father *mun* as he would his wife's father or his ma-
 ternal uncle.

While working at Melgarsh *mad*, I had the opportunity to see how
 such a *mokkthoditi* arrangement functioned. Amoniuf, the common
 wife of the two brothers, Singharsh and Singhud, had a regular lover,
 a Teivilkh from Teir *mad* of the Kusharsh *modol*, whose name I un-
 fortunately have not recorded (his picture is shown on pages 56 and
 [113] 57 of Lidio Cipriani's *I Toda, Archivio per l'Antropologia e la Etno-*
logia, Vol. LXVII, 1937). Things seemed to go very smoothly, and
 all three men as well as the woman appeared happy and on the best of
 terms. The Teivilkh used to come regularly to Melgarsh, at least twice
 a week in the afternoon, staying until the next morning when he would
 go home again early. I was told that he had given Amoniuf a very
 [43] nice gold necklace, which I was, however, never shown. The husbands

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